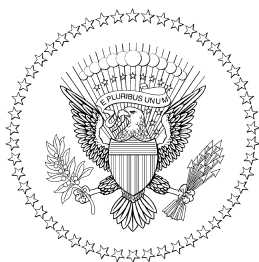


Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, December 17, 2007  
Volume 43—Number 50  
Pages 1577–1598

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## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, December 14, 2007

**Remarks Following a Meeting With  
Jewish Community Leaders**

*December 10, 2007*

I've just had an extraordinary meeting with Jewish men and women, many of whom are from different parts of the world, who are fortunate to call America home. And they do so because of our great tradition of religious freedom and religious tolerance.

We discussed how America must remain engaged in helping people realize the great blessings of religious freedom and where we find societies in which religious freedom is not allowed to practice, that we must do something about it.

I recognize today is International Human Rights Day. And a good way to celebrate this day is to invited people from our country and from around the world to share with me their stories, stories of courage and stories of people who simply want to be in a society where people are allowed to worship freely.

We discussed the world in which we live today. We all recognize that we're in an ideological struggle against people who murder the innocent in order to achieve political objectives, and that on the one hand, America must do everything to protect ourselves and are doing so. In the long term, the best way to defeat an ideology of hate is with an ideology of hope. An ideology of hope is one that says, we value your religion; we honor the way you worship. And in our society, you can worship any way you so choose, and that's the vision and dream for societies around the world.

So I want to thank you for sharing your stories with me. I thank you for your courage. May God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

**Remarks on Lighting the Hanukkah  
Menorah**

*December 10, 2007*

Thank you. Good evening. Laura and I welcome you to the White House. Mr. Attorney General, thank you for being here—Secretary Chertoff and family. Hanukkah is a time of joy and festivity in the Jewish religion. We're honored to gather with members of the Jewish community to celebrate this holiday.

During Hanukkah, we remember an ancient struggle for freedom. More than 2,000 years ago, a cruel tyrant ruled Judea and forbade the Israelites from practicing their religion. A band of brothers came together to fight this oppression, and against incredible odds, they liberated the capital city of Jerusalem. As they set about rededicating the Holy Temple, they witnessed a great miracle: that purified oil that was supposed to last for 1 day burned for 8.

Jewish families commemorate this miracle by lighting the menorah for the 8 nights of Hanukkah. The Talmud instructs families to place the menorah in public view so the entire world can see its light. The flames remind us that light triumphs over darkness, faith conquers despair, and the desire for freedom burns inside every man, woman, and child.

As we light the Hanukkah candles this year, we pray for those who still live under the shadow of tyranny. This afternoon I met with a group of Jewish immigrants to mark International Human Rights Day. Many of these men and women fled from religious oppression in countries like Iran and Syria and the Soviet Union. They came to America because our Nation is a beacon of freedom. And they see a day of hope on the horizon when people all across the world will worship in freedom. The forces of intolerance can suppress the menorah, but they can never extinguish its light.

The menorah we light tonight has special meaning. It once belonged to Chayim Pearl, who was the great-grandfather of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl. While reporting in Pakistan in 2002, Daniel was kidnaped and murdered by terrorists. His only crime was being a Jewish American, something Daniel Pearl would never deny. In his final moments, Daniel told his captors about a street in Israel named for his great-grandfather. He looked into their camera, and he said, "My father is Jewish; my mother is Jewish; and I'm Jewish." These words have become a source of inspiration for Americans of all faiths. They show the courage of a man who refused to bow before terror and the strength of a spirit that could not be broken.

Daniel's memory remains close to our hearts. Those who knew him best remember a gifted writer who loved the violin and made friends wherever he went. We're honored that Daniel's parents, Ruth and Judea, have joined us today. We thank them for their work on behalf of the Daniel Pearl Foundation. The foundation helps bring people from different cultures together through journalism and music. It's a fitting tribute to Daniel's lifelong pursuit of truth and tolerance. By honoring Daniel, we are given the opportunity to bring forth hope from the darkness of tragedy, and that is a miracle worth celebrating during the Festival of Lights.

Laura and I wish people of Jewish faith around the world a happy Hanukkah. May God bless you all.

Tonight we will hear a wonderful performance by the Zamir Chorale. But first, I ask Ruth and Judea to light the Pearl family menorah and lead the blessings.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:27 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey.

### **Remarks Following a Discussion on Teen Drug Use Statistics December 11, 2007**

Thank you. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. Director Walters and Dr. Volkow, thank you for joining me. We've got

the Ambassador *de Mexico y tambien Colombia*—thanks for coming. I appreciate you all being here. Where are the—*Embajador, bienvenidos—los dos*. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate the students from Brown Academy for joining us. I want to thank officials in my administration for being here. I welcome our honored guests.

I am pleased to be here with the men and women who have enlisted, have signed up, in our country's fight against illegal drugs. You battle an unrelenting evil that ruins families, endangers neighborhoods, and stalks our children. You're part of a mission that will shape our Nation's future. You're fulfilling the highest calling of citizenship; you're giving your fellow Americans the chance for a better life. And I thank you for your good and noble work.

I've just come from a roundtable—or was it a square table—but either way, it was a table—[laughter]—where I met with community activists and youth leaders, people who've heard a call to answer our Nation's need to be engaged in a fierce battle against drug abuse—those who encourage it and those who profit from it. The drug trade has enriched our society's enemies. It has funded acts of terror. It feeds an addiction that causes some Americans to turn to crime.

When I took office, our country was facing a troubling rate of drug use among young people. A new generation was in danger of being swept up in a cycle of addiction, crime, and hopelessness. This was a looming crisis, and I felt it required an aggressive response.

And so in 2002, I committed our Nation to an ambitious goal to cut drug use amongst young people by 25 percent over a 5-year period. John Walters agreed with that goal. He's been in charge of leading an effort to achieve that goal. We took a tough and balanced approach. We would cut the supply of drugs coming to our country through aggressive action by law enforcement personnel and international partners. We would fight the demand for drugs here at home through prevention and treatment. In other words, our strategy was balance. On the one hand, we'll interdict and prevent and disrupt the drug supply networks, and on the other hand, we'll work to convince people they shouldn't use drugs in the first place. And those that

have, there's prevention—or there's recovery programs for you.

This strategy has had promising results. This morning I was briefed on the latest "Monitoring the Future" study, which tracks drug use amongst America's youth. It reports that since 2001, the overall use of illicit drugs by young people has dropped by 24 percent. Marijuana use fell by 25 percent, steroid use by a third, and the use of ecstasy by 54 percent. The most encouraging statistic relates to the use of methamphetamine, which has plummeted by an impressive 64 percent since 2001.

One exception to this trend is a rise in the abuse of certain prescription painkillers. This is troubling, and we're going to continue to confront the challenge. Yet the overall direction is hopeful. Because Americans took action, today, there are an estimated 860,000 fewer children using drugs than 6 years ago. Because Americans took action, because grassroots activists stood up and said, "We've had enough," because law enforcement worked hard, communities are safer, families are stronger, and more children have the hope of a healthy and happy life.

This is a remarkable achievement, and it is a tribute to the work of a lot of really good people. I'd like to remind people, government can rally; government can fund; but the true work is done at the grassroots level. We've got representatives from our law enforcement organizations who are with us today. They've risked their lives to cut the supply of drugs to our streets. Over the past 6 years, they have seized record amounts of cocaine coming into the United States. I see that Admiral Allen is here from the United States Coast Guard. They've got people out there on those cutters in the high seas doing incredibly important work. Admiral, you thank those troops for all they're doing.

We've worked with our allies to stop their drugs coming in from Colombia. And Madam Ambassador, you need to thank your strong President for leading the fight against drugs in Colombia.

We're working with the President of Mexico, Mr. Ambassador, and we're helping that man take the lead. He made some tough decisions and courageous decisions. He's led an unprecedented assault against drug organiza-

tions in Mexico, and we want to continue to work together. We got to have a strategy on both sides of the border to deal with a common problem. So I want to thank you both for being here. Pass word on to your bosses that I admire their courage and appreciate their hard work.

I appreciate the fact that our drug enforcement focused on meth, and therefore, we have a dramatic drop. You might remember, a while ago, that methamphetamine seemed to be a—just running so rampant that people were worried that we could never get our—get a handle on it. And yet there's been a dramatic drop. A lot of it has to do with the fact that our law enforcement officers, in both urban and rural settings, are on the frontline of disrupting the suppliers.

They appreciate the fact that we're dismantling drug trafficking operations. We're seizing supplies, and we're putting the peddlers of poisons where they belong, and that is behind bars. Appreciate your outstanding service. For all those who wear the uniform of law enforcement, our Nation owes you a great debt of gratitude.

At home, countless Americans have worked to reduce the demand of illegal drugs. It's one thing to affect supply, but when you reduce demand, it affects the capacity of people to supply. In other words, if we have people—fewer people using, there's not going to be a need to supply as much. On the frontlines of this efforts are parents, are teachers, are counselors who are sending our kids a clear message: Drug use is not fun; it is not glamorous; it is harmful. And I want to thank those who are making that a clear message. Drugs destroys lives.

This addiction is hard to break. It's a hard thing to break a drug addiction. Yet many Americans are breaking it. With us today are some young people who have fought to win this difficult struggle. And we met with them, and I want to talk about two of them. I asked their permission, and they said, "That's fine, Mr. President. You can—you go ahead and lay our stories out." And the reason I want to do so is because I want others to hear the stories of two youngsters who made an incredibly tough decision to save their life.

First is Sara Johnson. She started using drugs when she was 12 years old. As her addiction grew, she would steal drugs from medicine cabinets without even knowing what the drugs were. She pawned things to get money so she could go out on the streets to buy drugs. And she hit bottom, and she was scared. Yet she summoned up the courage to get treatment. And she didn't like the treatment at first. She told me that after about 6 months, she decided she wanted to leave without permission. [Laughter] Then she reassessed her life. She made a personal choice and went back into treatment. And she is in recovery, and she's working for a better life. I said: "What do you want to be, now that you've made this incredibly important step in your life at a young age? Do you have a goal?" She said, "Plastic surgeon." Then she looked at me, and I thought for a minute she said, "Well, you could use a little work, Mr. President." [Laughter] But Sara, thank you for your courage. I'm proud you're here. You might just stand up and let the people take a look at you. Thank you.

Hear the story of Justin Calderon. He was raised by a mom who had a serious drug addiction. Drugs crowd out love and responsibility. If you love drugs more than you love your child, serious problems can arise, and this is a man who knows it firsthand. He spent his childhood on the streets, seeking drugs and committing crimes to support his habit. One night, he was alone in a jail cell, and after years of addiction and struggle, he told himself, he said, "You are better than this." And so he's in a recovery program. He's been off drugs for a year. He plans to go back to school. And what he wants to do is to give back to society by helping other young people fight drug addiction. *Bienvenidos*; welcome.

Two joyous souls who are inspiring others—I told them, I said, you just don't know whose lives you've touched, but you have touched the President's life. But there's somebody paying attention to you. And so thanks for leading.

So today we celebrate progress against substance abuse. We also know that this work is not finished. There's still a lot more work to be done. Thousands of children still live in homes torn apart by drugs. Thousands

more are still considering whether to try drugs for the first time. It's up to all Americans to be involved in this important struggle against drug addiction. It's up to all of us to urge our fellow citizens to make the right choice and to help those who make the wrong choice understand the consequences and that there is a more hopeful future.

In this effort, we need more help from role models that our kids look up to. It's really important for professional sports associations to continue to crack down on drug abuse by athletes. And it's important that more people in Hollywood stand up and send a right message to our children.

All Americans have a responsibility to encourage people to turn away from the losing spiral of addiction and to make good choices in life. But the great thing about our country and the reason I'm so optimistic is there are thousands and thousands of people willing to take the lead in their own communities, people who have seen a problem and said, "We're going to do something about it." Like this good woman right here from eastern Kentucky. She said, "We live in rural America, and we got a significant prescription drug problem that's affecting every family in that area." And so instead of wringing her hands, she said, "I think I'm going to do something about it," and has led the charge. We can help, but it's her initiative, along with thousands of others who have stepped up and said, "We're going to save lives one soul at a time." Why? Because they love America, and they love their neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

This mission of dealing with drug abuse is worthy of a great people and a great nation. It's a worthy mission. It is a struggle that requires us to confront torment with patience, weakness with understanding, and evil with resolve, hope, and love.

I want to thank you all for being a part of this great effort. I thank John and all those in the grassroots for accomplishing an important goal. I urge you to continue staying in this battle. I say to our young folks: Make the right choice in life, and you can realize your dreams here in the United States of America.

Thank you for being here. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Nora D. Volkow, Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse; Ambassador to the U.S. Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana and President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico; Ambassador to the U.S. Carolina Barco Isakson and President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia; and Karen Engle, executive director, Operation UNITE.

### Remarks Following a Meeting With President Giorgio Napolitano of Italy December 11, 2007

**President Bush.** Mr. President, it's my honor to welcome you to the Oval Office. We just had a very substantive meeting. And it will be my honor to feed you a lunch. I doubt it is going to be—the food will be as good as the food I had when I visited your beautiful country.

Bilateral relations with the United States and Italy are very good. We have a lot of interchange between our countries, with business as well as travel. And there are millions of Italian Americans who will be pleased, Mr. President, to know we've got good relations.

Secondly, we just had a really around-the-world trip as we discussed problem areas and our mutual desire to work together to help solve those problems.

We discussed Afghanistan, Lebanon, Kosovo. I briefed the President on the recent Annapolis conference that we hosted to help get the peace process started between the Palestinians and Israelis. We had a very compatible relation—discussion because by and large, we're in agreement on how to advance the solutions to these issues.

And finally, I'm—have expressed and will continue to dialog with the President about my deep concern about Iran. Iran is dangerous. Iran—we believe Iran had a secret military weapons program. And Iran must explain to the world why they had a program. Iran has an obligation to explain to the IAEA why they hid this program from them. Iran is dangerous, and they'll be even more dangerous if they learn how to enrich uranium.

And so I look forward to working with the President to explain our strategy and figure

out ways we can work together to prevent this from happening for the sake of world peace.

So I'm sure proud to have you here, Mr. President; and welcome.

**President Napolitano.** Thank you very much, Mr. President. It has been a great pleasure for me to accept your invitation. You kindly addressed me 6 months ago when you were in Rome, and we had already then very positive talks.

And in the past few months, there have been important and rather positive developments in the international situation. First of all, I wanted to express to President Bush my deep appreciation for the responsibility he wanted to take to foster negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian authorities in view of a peace treaty.

Italy is present in several areas of crisis. In this moment, it is an Italian general who is taking the command of the Kabul region in Afghanistan. In Iraq, we give our contribution to the stabilization of the country, participating in NATO training activities. And as a matter of fact, there has been an undeniable improvement in the security conditions in Iraq in the past few months.

In fact, generally speaking, we share the same concerns, and we express a common commitment. And speaking particularly of Kosovo, we could verify how close are our positions on the way to deal with the independence of Kosovo, taking into account the difficult overall situation in the region.

We want to discuss constructively our positions on all questions and all threats. We just want to give our contribution and our idea how to face successfully all threats, including the relative threat of nuclear weaponization of Iran.

I just want to add a word about Europe, because in the past few months, there has been something important. Europe was able—European Union was able to overcome a stalemate, a very dangerous institutional stalemate. The constitutional treaty has been put aside, but a new treaty has been outlined unanimously, and the day after tomorrow it will be signed in Lisbon. And on the basis of this new treaty, which has to be ratified by the signed—I am sure it will be ratified

by all 27 member states—we'll have new figures; we'll have new institutions more capable to affirm the role of a united Europe on the international scene.

Italy and Europe both must think there is possibilities for international security and peace for the cause of liberty and democracy. And the more Europe will be united and will be effective, I think the better we can reach these goals.

We cannot ask the United States to take care of our security. International security is a common duty, and Europe must be up to this challenge.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir. Glad you're here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:48 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Napolitano referred to Brig. Gen. Federico Bonato, Italian Army, commanding general, Regional Command Capital, NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

### **Statement on the Situation in Burma** *December 11, 2007*

I am deeply disturbed by the report that U.N. Special Rapporteur Paulo Pinheiro released today in Geneva documenting his findings from his trip to Burma last month. It provides further alarming details about the Burmese authorities' crackdown on demonstrations by monks and democracy activists and the severe reprisals that continue today.

He describes how the regime harassed, detained, and killed many peaceful demonstrators. The Special Rapporteur received reports, for example, that a large number of bodies were burned September 27–30 at the Ye Way Crematorium.

I strongly condemn these actions and the junta's refusal to accept the need for real change in Burma. Even while Mr. Pinheiro was in Burma, the regime continued to arrest and harass monks and democracy activists. The regime has also closed down monasteries, including the Maggin Monastery in Rangoon that served as a hospice and treatment center for HIV/AIDS patients.

Mr. Pinheiro's report demonstrates why the world cannot go back to business as usual

with General Than Shwe and his junta. I call on all members of the international community to condemn the atrocities detailed in Mr. Pinheiro's report in the strongest possible terms. Last month, I announced new sanctions on the leaders of the regime and their cronies. Should the regime continue to ignore calls for a true democratic transition and the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners, the United States is prepared to lead international efforts to place more sanctions on the regime. Laura and I will continue to stand with the Burmese people as they seek the freedom they deserve.

NOTE: The President referred to Senior Gen. Than Shwe, Chairman, State Peace and Development Council of Burma; and Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy in Burma.

### **Proclamation 8211—Wright Brothers Day, 2007**

*December 11, 2007*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

The cause of discovery and exploration is a desire written in the human heart. On Wright Brothers Day, we remember the achievement of two young brothers on the Outer Banks of North Carolina whose persistence, skill, ingenuity, and daring revolutionized the world.

Orville and Wilbur Wright made the first manned, powered flight on December 17, 1903. Orville experienced the thrill of flight when he felt the first lift of the wing of the small wood and canvas aircraft that would travel 120 feet in 12 seconds. The brothers' passion and spirit of discovery helped define our Nation and paved the way for future generations of innovators to launch satellites, orbit the Earth, and travel to the Moon and back.

Our country is continuing the Wright brothers' great American journey. My Administration is committed to advancing space science, human space flight, and space exploration. We will continue to work to expand the horizons of human knowledge to ensure

that America is at the forefront of discovery for decades to come.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved December 17, 1963, as amended (77 Stat. 402; 36 U.S.C. 143), has designated December 17 of each year as “Wright Brothers Day” and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation inviting the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim December 17, 2007, as Wright Brothers Day.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:58 a.m., December 13, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 12, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on December 14.

### **Remarks on Presenting the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor**

*December 12, 2007*

You know, one of the wonderful experiences of being a President is to welcome citizens who have served their communities with valor and compassion. And I—General and I are surrounded by four such gentlemen who have been heroic in their duties. They will tell you they were just doing their job; I’m telling you they did their job with extraordinary courage. And so it’s been an honor to award them this precious medal. And I want to thank you all very much for joining us. Proud to call you fellow citizens.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:11 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey.

### **Statement on Signing the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007**

*December 12, 2007*

Today I signed into law the “Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007,” a bill to reauthorize Head Start. Over the past 40 years, Head Start has provided comprehensive child development services to more than 20 million low-income children and their families to promote school readiness. Because of the National Reporting System, we know that more Head Start programs are helping children gain early reading and math skills. But we must take steps to improve Head Start to ensure that low-income children arrive at school ready to learn.

I am pleased that this bill addresses several longstanding administration priorities, such as increased competition among Head Start providers, improved coordination of early childhood delivery systems, and stronger educational performance standards. Increasing competition for providers will help ensure that we offer the highest quality programs to our Nation’s most vulnerable young children. Greater collaboration among Head Start agencies, schools, and other programs serving young children will help ensure our investments are better aligned and more effective. Stronger educational performance standards and an emphasis on research-based curricula and classroom practices will increase children’s preparedness for school. I also support the bill’s provisions to strengthen fiscal accountability and program oversight, so that dollars intended to serve children are spent wisely.

I am, however, deeply disappointed that the bill ends the National Reporting System, our only tool to examine consistently how Head Start children are performing in programs across the Nation. We should be working to provide more and better data to parents, teachers, and policymakers, not less. I am concerned that the bill authorizes spending levels higher than those proposed in my budget. Approval of this legislation is not an endorsement of these funding levels or a commitment to request them. I am also disappointed that the bill fails to include my

proposal to protect faith-based organizations' religious hiring autonomy.

I thank Members of both parties in Congress who worked on this legislation. I will continue to work with Congress to ensure that our neediest children are prepared for success in school and a lifetime of achievement.

NOTE: H.R. 1429, approved December 12, was assigned Public Law No. 110-134.

### **Memorandum on Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act**

*December 12, 2007*

Presidential Determination No. 2008-6

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State*

*Subject:* Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 7(a) of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-45) (the "Act"), I hereby determine that it is necessary to protect the national security interests of the United States to suspend for a period of 6 months the limitations set forth in sections 3(b) and 7(b) of the Act. My Administration remains committed to beginning the process of moving our Embassy to Jerusalem.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress, accompanied by a report in accordance with section 7(a) of the Act, and to publish the determination in the *Federal Register*.

This suspension shall take effect after transmission of this determination and report to the Congress.

**George W. Bush**

### **Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the "Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007"**

*December 12, 2007*

*To the House of Representatives:*

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 3963, the "Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007." Like its predecessor, H.R. 976, this bill does not put poor children first and it moves our country's health care system in the wrong direction. Ultimately, our Nation's goal should be to move children who have no health insurance to private coverage—not to move children who already have private health insurance to government coverage. As a result, I cannot sign this legislation.

The purpose of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) was to help low-income children whose families were struggling, but did not qualify for Medicaid, to get the health care coverage that they needed. My Administration strongly supports reauthorization of SCHIP. That is why in February of this year I proposed a 5-year reauthorization of SCHIP and a 20 percent increase in funding for the program.

Some in the Congress have sought to spend more on SCHIP than my budget proposal. In response, I told the Congress that I was willing to work with its leadership to find any additional funds necessary to put poor children first, without raising taxes.

The leadership in the Congress has refused to meet with my Administration's representatives. Although they claim to have made "substantial changes" to the legislation, H.R. 3963 is essentially identical to the legislation that I vetoed in October. The legislation would still shift SCHIP away from its original purpose by covering adults. It would still include coverage of many individuals with incomes higher than the median income in the United States. It would still result in government health care for approximately 2 million children who already have private health care coverage. The new bill, like the old bill, does not responsibly offset its new and unnecessary spending, and it still raises taxes on working Americans.

Because the Congress has chosen to send me an essentially identical bill that has the same problems as the flawed bill I previously vetoed, I must veto this legislation, too. I continue to stand ready to work with the leaders of the Congress, on a bipartisan basis, to reauthorize the SCHIP program in a way that puts poor children first; moves adults out of a program meant for children; and does not abandon the bipartisan tradition that marked the original enactment of the SCHIP program. In the interim, I call on the Congress to extend funding under the current program to ensure no disruption of services to needy children.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
December 12, 2007.

### **Remarks Following a Meeting With President Umaru Yar'Adua of Nigeria**

*December 13, 2007*

**President Bush.** Mr. President, it's been my honor to welcome you here to the White House. Now, we just had a very extensive and fruitful discussion on a variety of issues, and that's what you'd expect when friends meet together.

I—the President is committed to democracy and rule of law. He was very articulate in his desire to make sure that the people of Nigeria understand that their Government will be fair and transparent and will be a government of the people. Mr. President, I am impressed by your commitment to reform, your adherence to the concept that rule of law, and your belief in transparency. And I congratulate you for being a strong leader.

We also talked about social justice issues, the issue of education. The President is committed to seeing to it that compulsory education is followed through on in this country, throughout the country, and I admire that. And we want to help you. The United States has got a program that is dedicated to making sure every child gets a good education. It's in our national interests that that be the case.

It's also in our national interests, Mr. President, to help you, if you so desire, on

issues like HIV/AIDS and malaria. The President is strongly committed to helping the Nigerian families affected by these diseases get treatment and help. He understands that there needs to be a comprehensive program of prevention, distribution of antiretrovirals, and then a capacity to help the orphans who have been left behind as a result of this terrible disease. And we're committed through what we call PEPFAR, Mr. President. I'm going to the United States Congress and ask them to double our commitment because we believe it's in our interests to help you if you so desire. It's in our interests from a security perspective; it's in our interests from a moral perspective.

And so we've got a good visit. I'm proud you're here, and I welcome you and thank you for your time and for your heart.

**President Yar'Adua.** Thank you very much, Mr. President. I feel highly honored and privileged to be here and have the opportunity to share these few moments with you. These are moments that I'll never forget in my life.

I have briefed Mr. President on the situation in Nigeria, our efforts to anchor democracy on the rule of law, to help a credible electoral process, and to ensure that the principles of justice, equity will guide the conduct of affairs in Nigeria—transparency, accountability, and the fight against corruption. And Mr. President has expressed the support of himself and the Government of the United States and the people of the United States to assist Nigeria to ensure that we continue to uphold—[inaudible]—democracy, the rule of law, zero tolerance for corruption, and the development of a free market economy through economic reforms that we have been effecting for the last 8 years.

Now, this will set the principles upon which we'll build and develop a free society capable of growing an economy that will cater for the development and needs of the people of Nigeria. And in this great effort we are making, we find great friendship and assistance from the Government and people of the United States. And we are very grateful for this expression of support, confidence, and trust.

We have discussed a wide range of issues beside democracy and the rule of law; we

have—and the economic reforms. We have discussed about the problems of HIV/AIDS, the problem of malaria, challenges in education. And the United States Government will help us to meet these challenges as we go along. And I think this is an excellent humanitarian gesture for which I, personally, and the people and Government of Nigeria are extremely grateful.

We have discussed one—security issues and the security within Nigeria itself, within the Niger Delta region, and within the Gulf of Guinea. And we have also discussed security issues—peace and security on the African Continent. And we shall partner with—[inaudible]—to assist not only Nigeria but also the African Continent, to actualize its peace and security—[inaudible]—initiative, which is an initiative to help standby forces of brigade-size in each of the regional economic groupings within the African Continent.

I think what we have discussed has given me hope. And myself, the Government, and people of Nigeria are inspired by the United States of America's achievement and the principles which guide it. And this is a posit we are trading, and the friendship and understanding of the United States will propel Nigeria with this inspiration to make the transformations that we need to do into a modern nation from an underdeveloped nation, capable of meeting the development and needs of its people.

I thank you very much, Mr. President. This is a rare opportunity.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

### **Statement on the Death of Brigadier General Francois El Hajj of Lebanon** *December 13, 2007*

I strongly condemn yesterday's assassination of Lebanese Brigadier General Francois El Hajj and extend my condolences to his family and the families of the innocents who were murdered alongside him.

This assassination marks the 12th political assassination or attempted assassination Leb-

anon has suffered since October 2004. Like the many victims before him, General El Hajj was a supporter of Lebanon's independence and an opponent of Syria's interference in Lebanon's internal affairs. I call on the international community to support the Government of Lebanon in its efforts to bring to justice the perpetrators of these vicious attacks and to stand with the citizens of Lebanon who continue to struggle to safeguard their freedom, sovereignty, and democracy.

This act of terrorism again reminds us of the importance of the international tribunal established by the U.N. Security Council earlier this year and of the urgency of ensuring that the tribunal is fully funded and capable of commencing its operations as soon as possible, to begin holding accountable those responsible for this systematic campaign of murder against Lebanon's most ardent patriots. We must work together to support and strengthen an independent and democratic Lebanon.

This attack comes as Lebanon is seeking to choose a new President. The United States supports the efforts of the democratically elected Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Armed Forces to maintain the sovereignty and stability of Lebanon before the Presidential elections. As Lebanon seeks to select a President democratically and in accordance with its Constitution, interference by the Syrian regime and its allies, aimed at intimidating the Lebanese people, must end. The people of Lebanon deserve the opportunity to choose their leaders in freedom and without fear.

### **Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters**

*December 14, 2007*

**The President.** Good morning. I just finished meeting with members of my Cabinet. I am proud of this team. I appreciate their service to the country. We discussed the priorities that we're working on to meet the needs of the American people. We're talking about the business that remains on Capitol Hill.

I want to thank the Senate and congratulate the Senate for passing a good energy bill, and now the House must act. Congress also must move quickly to pass legislation to protect middle class families from the burden of the Alternative Minimum Tax, without raising taxes. And Congress must pass legislation to ensure our intelligence professionals can continue to effectively monitor terrorist communications.

And Congress must move forward with spending legislation to fund the day-to-day operations of the Federal Government so that the Cabinet Departments can provide essential services for the American people.

Because Congress did not pass any spending bills by the end of the fiscal year—with the exception of one—many essential services are now being funded under what's called a continuing resolution. This is a bill that keeps the Federal Government running on a temporary basis while lawmakers work out their differences.

In recent days, lawmakers have made some important progress in working out such differences. I'm pleased to hear that they are close to reaching agreement on a budget. There are a lot of details left to be worked out, and I hope they will pass a bill that is fiscally responsible and does not raise taxes. I also understand that Congress may provide a downpayment on the war funding I requested, without artificial timetables for withdrawal.

These are encouraging signs. Unfortunately, Members of Congress have not been able to complete their work by today, when the current continuing resolution expires. So last night Congress passed another continuing resolution that will fund the Government for one more week—and I just signed the resolution.

I hope Congress will use the additional time productively. I urge them to pass a clean spending package that meets the reasonable spending levels I have put forward, without gimmicks, without policy riders that could not be enacted in the ordinary legislative process, and with much needed funding for our troops in combat.

It would be disappointing if Members of Congress did not finish their work by the holidays. But if they don't, they should not

carry the unfinished business of 2007 into the new year. Instead, they should pass a 1-year continuing resolution that does not include wasteful spending or higher taxes. And they must ensure that our troops on the frontlines have the funds and resources they need to prevail.

I'll take a couple of questions. Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press].

### **Major League Baseball**

**Q.** Mr. President, on the Mitchell report, sir, do you think that the baseball players actually mentioned in the report should be punished?

**The President.** A couple of reactions to the Mitchell report—as you know, I'm a baseball fan. I love the sport; I love the game. Like many fans, I've been troubled by the steroid allegations. I think it's best that all of us not jump to any conclusions on individual player's name, but we can jump to this conclusion: that steroids have sullied the game, and players and the owners must take the Mitchell report seriously. I'm confident they will.

And my hope is that this report is a part of putting the steroid era of baseball behind us. You know, I—in the State of the Union a couple of years ago, I addressed the issue of steroids, and the reason I did so is because I understand the impact that professional athletes can have on our Nation's youth. And I just urge our—those in the public spotlight, particularly athletes, to understand that when they violate their bodies, they're sending a terrible signal to America's young.

Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters].

### **North Korea**

**Q.** Mr. President, what was Kim Jong Il's message to you in response to your letter to him? And what was—what is your response to him?

**The President.** Well, first, I'm—you know, I got his attention with a letter, and he can get my attention by fully disclosing his programs, including any plutonium he may have processed and converted—that—into whatever he's used it for. We just need to know.

As well, he can get our attention by fully disclosing his proliferation activities. We have

laid out a way forward. And I say “we”—there’s four other countries that have joined us; we’ve got what’s called the six-party talks. And the five of us agree that there’s a way forward for the—Kim Jong Il, and an important step is a full declaration of programs, materials that may have been developed to create weapons, as well as the proliferation activities of the regime.

Thank you very much.

**Q.** Oh, don’t stop now.

**The President.** I had a—well, I’ve got freezing Cabinet members out here. [*Laughter*] They’re whispering; you can’t hear their whispers. [*Laughter*] I can just feel their vibe saying, “I’m envious. They’re all wearing these expensive coats, and here we are.” [*Laughter*]

I hope you enjoyed the holiday bash as much as I did. I noticed some of the silverware is missing. [*Laughter*] We’ll be taking a full inventory. [*Laughter*] Happy holidays.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea. He also referred to H.J. Res. 69, which was assigned Public Law No. 110–137. A reporter referred to former Senator George J. Mitchell, author of a report to the commissioner of baseball on the use of illegal performance-enhancing substances in Major League Baseball.

### Remarks With President Alan Garcia Perez of Peru on Signing the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act

December 14, 2007

**President Bush.** Thank you. Thank you, please be seated. Good afternoon. *Buenas tardes.* President Garcia, thank you for being here.

Peru and the United States are strong partners, and today, we’re making that partnership even stronger. In a few moments, I’ll have the honor of signing a bill that approves the vital free trade agreement between Peru and the United States. The bill will help increase opportunities for workers, ranchers, farmers, and businessmen in both our countries.

I want to thank the many Members of Congress, both in the House and the Senate, who came together to get this bill passed. I particularly want to thank the Members of Congress who are here today: the ranking member of the Ways and Means, Jim McCrery from Louisiana; Wally Herger from California; and Kevin Brady from the great State of Texas. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate members of my Cabinet who have joined us today: the Secretary of State, Condi Rice; Hank Paulson, Secretary of the Treasury; Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez; Ambassador Sue Schwab, USTR; former Ambassador—I guess you still call him Ambassador, but he used to work for us—Rob Portman is here as well. [*Laughter*] And the reason the members of the Cabinet are here is because this administration is firmly committed to free and fair trade. We believe it’s in the interest of the United States.

I want to thank John Walters as well, who is with us today. He’s a member of the Cabinet—there he is. I want to thank Chuck Connor, Acting Secretary of the Agriculture; Steve Preston, U.S. Business Administration.

I welcome our Peruvian guests. I thank the Ambassadors from countries in our neighborhood; I’m glad you’re here—Ambassadors from El Salvador, Honduras, Chile, Mexico, Canada, Guatemala, Dominican Republic. I thank the Ambassadors and other representatives from countries who have pending free trade agreements before the United States Congress: the Ambassador from Colombia, Panama, and as well the Republic of Korea.

I thank those from the—who care about trade, who’ve joined us today. I appreciate your hard work on getting these agreements signed and ratified. And you know what I know, that when we extend trade, when we expand trade, America advances our deepest values as well as our economic interests. Opening markets has helped expand democracy. Opening markets helps expand and strengthen the rule of law. And opening markets helps lift millions out of poverty.

Open markets contribute to America’s prosperity. Exports now account for a larger percentage of our GDP than at any other time in our history, which means that trade

is a key driver for economic growth. Exports support higher paying jobs for our workers. This week, we learned that over the 12 months ending in October, U.S. exports increased by 13 percent.

The bill I signed today advances free and fair trade with one of the fastest growing economies in the Western Hemisphere. Last year, Peru's economy expanded by more than 7½ percent, and I congratulate the President—wish he'd lend us a couple of percent. *[Laughter]* It's impossible to do. But trade will help growth. It will help the U.S. grow, and it will help Peru grow. Over the past 3 years, trade between our two nations has more than doubled to nearly \$9 billion. With this free trade agreement, we will expand our trade even more and create new opportunities for citizens in both countries.

The agreement creates new opportunities here in the United States. Once implemented, it will immediately eliminate duties on about 80 percent of U.S. consumer and industrial goods sold in Peru. It will eliminate all remaining duties within 10 years. Once implemented, the agreement will also immediately eliminate duties on more than two-thirds of U.S. agricultural exports to Peru and eliminate most of the remaining duties over the following 5 to 15 years.

This agreement will also create new opportunities for the people of Peru. This is good for the people of Peru. After all, the agreement locks in access for Peruvian businesses, small-business owners, and agricultural folks to the largest market in the world. With more U.S. products available in their country, Peruvians will benefit from more choices and more lower prices—or better prices. The more a consumer has to choose from, the better off that consumer will be. Opening up markets to U.S. goods and services will help the Peruvian consumer by removing barriers to U.S. services and investment.

The agreement will help create a secure, predictable legal framework that will help attract U.S. investors. The Peruvian people understand that expanding trade with the United States will improve their lives; that's what they understand. And so their representatives in the legislature approved this agreement by an overwhelming margin. And by his presence today, President Garcia is

showing our common commitment to a hemisphere that grows in liberty and opportunity for all.

I want to thank the Congress for passing this bill. They passed it with broad, bipartisan support. Earlier this year, my administration and Congress came together on a bipartisan approach to free trade agreements. Under this approach, we included enforceable labor and environmental provisions in our pending free trade agreements. This is the approach we applied to our agreement with Peru, and this agreement shows the American people that Congress and the administration can work together—and are working together—in following a bipartisan way forward on trade.

I urge Members of Congress to continue on this path as they consider agreements with two other important partners in the region, Colombia and Panama. Across our hemisphere, people are watching what the Congress will do. They're watching to see what this Congress will do when it comes to how we treat our friends. They're watching carefully the actions of the Congress in regards to the free trade agreements with Colombia and Panama. The champions of false populism will use any failure to approve these trade agreements as evidence that America will never treat other democracies in the region as full partners.

Those who espouse the language of false populism will use failure of these trade agreements as a way of showing America doesn't—isn't committed to our friends in the hemisphere. It is vital that Congress send a strong message that the United States of America is committed to advancing freedom and prosperity in our neighborhood and approve these agreements with strong, bipartisan majorities.

Congress also needs to move forward with a bill to implement a free trade agreement with one of our most important partners in the Far East, South Korea. This agreement will create jobs and opportunity on both sides of the Pacific. It will strengthen a democratic ally. I urge Congress to act quickly and send this good bill to my desk.

As we work with Congress to approve trade legislation, we're also working to break down barriers to trade and investment at the

global level. The best way to do so is through the Doha round of trade talks. A successful Doha round would open up markets for America's goods and crops and services. Doha also represents an historic opportunity to help lift millions of people out of poverty and despair. It's in our national interest to do so. It's in our moral interest to do so. My administration will continue to work to bring the Doha round of trade negotiations to a successful conclusion.

By advancing free and fair trade, we strengthen ties with our friends; we help democracies build a better life for their citizens; and we show that so long as the rules are fair, American workers can compete with anyone, anytime, anywhere.

Mr. President, I welcome you here to this important gathering. I ask you to give some words to the people of your country and our country. And after you finish speaking, it will be my honor to sign the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act.

Welcome, Mr. President.

**President Garcia.** Thank you. It's a great day for Peru; for the friendship between Peru and the United States. It's a great day for democracy and social justice and freedom. On the contrary, it's a bad day for the authoritarianism and those who against the democracy and free trade.

Your Excellency and dear friends, now that the implementation bill for the trade promotion agreement between the U.S. and Peru has been signed, I would like to thank the American people and the U.S. Congress. And especially I wish to express my sincere recognition to Your Excellency, the great supporter of the treaty and a true—a real, true ally and friend of the Peruvian people.

Today, the challenges to our societies are the consolidation of freedom, democracy, social justice, and peace, as well as the promotion of scientific and cultural development. The information and communication revolution allows countries to reach these goals and strengthen the links between our peoples by tearing down boulders and consolidating the foundations of human culture based in tolerance and respect to each other. Free trade agreements and world fora are important tools for these endeavors. More in-

vestment and more trade, as well as social policies, will contribute to eradicate poverty, protect the environment, and reduce and control migrations throughout the world.

Your Excellency, this is a crucial opportunity to consolidate hemispheric relations. The ties between the U.S. and Latin America has been blocked by misunderstandings, but they are also full of great prospects for reaching democracy and consensus.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Good Neighbor Policy and John F. Kennedy Alliance for Progress come to my mind in this moment. Those initiatives were designed to contribute to a firm relationship between our peoples based on justice and development. Unfortunately, those were lost opportunities.

Today, I think, begins a new era. The free trade area of the Americas and the free trade agreements in the hemisphere open a third opportunity we must not squander. The treaty with Peru has been studied and discussed at length—first with your administration; then it has been enhanced in the dialog with the U.S. Congress, which lead to an extension for the environment and on labor chapters, which will favor the poor, the population in the Andes, and their small enterprises.

Other Latin America countries should also benefit from the great American market and the investment opportunities. In that regard, Colombia is a country with great challenges ahead. The hurdles that are claimed to delay the agreement with Colombia will be swiftly solved if the treaty is approved, creating more jobs and investment and development.

I take upon myself the Latin American responsibility to request Your Excellency and the U.S. Congress to pass this agreement as soon as possible.

This treaty will contribute to our fight against narcotraffic and global terrorism. This would be critical to reaffirm democracy, freedom, investment, and prosperity for the Colombian people that I love very much. The same could be said about Panama.

Let me finish, Your Excellency, reaffirming that we both are committed to peace and against nuclear proliferation that may threaten the future of our children. We both fight for freedom and democracy. Your Excellency, you should be sure, as well as the Members of the Congress and the American

people, that in Peru this treaty would not exclude the poorest of the Peruvian workers. On the contrary, using the words of the great Abraham Lincoln, it will be a free trade agreement of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Thank you very much.

[At this point, President Bush signed the bill.]

**President Bush.** Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to former Office of Management and Budget Director Robert J. Portman; El Salvador's Ambassador to the U.S. Rene Antonio Leon Rodriguez; Honduras's Ambassador to the U.S. Roberto Flores Bermudez; Chile's Ambassador to the U.S. Mariano Fernandez; Mexico's Ambassador to the U.S. Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana; Canada's Ambassador to the U.S. Michael Wilson; Guatemala's Ambassador to the U.S. Guillermo Castillo; the Dominican Republic's Ambassador to the U.S. Flavio Dario Espinal Jacobo; Colombia's Ambassador to the U.S. Carolina Barco Isakson; Panama's Ambassador to the U.S. Federico Antonio Humbert Arias; and South Korea's Ambassador to the U.S. Lee Tae-sik. H.R. 3688, approved December 14, was assigned Public Law 110-138. The Office of the Press Secretary released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Statement on the Resignation of Candida Wolff and the Appointment of Daniel Meyers as Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs**

*December 14, 2007*

One of the most challenging jobs in any White House is managing the President's relationship with Congress. There are 535 Members of Congress, 2 parties, and 46 Committee chairmen—but only one Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs. Candi Wolff has done a remarkable job of working with Congress and advancing my legislative agenda.

As my chief adviser on congressional affairs, Candi has helped bring about many significant accomplishments, including energy legislation, trade agreements, tax relief, vital national security measures, and the confirma-

tion of two Supreme Court Justices. Her dedication and enthusiasm have resulted in policies that protect the American people, hold the line on spending, strengthen our economy, and support our troops. Candi has earned the respect of Members of Congress and her colleagues.

I have relied upon Candi's sound judgment, extensive experience, and thorough understanding of Capitol Hill as I have made decisions that affect the lives of all Americans. As Candi's service at the White House comes to an end, I appreciate her years of hard work and friendship. Laura and I wish Candi, her husband, Mark, and their two daughters Veronica and Claire all the best.

I am pleased to announce that Dan Meyer will succeed Candi as Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs. After serving as a House and Senate staffer for more than 15 years, including as chief of staff to the Speaker of the House, Dan knows how to help get things done in Congress. As a member of the legislative affairs office at the White House, he has been a capable leader who is well respected by Members on both sides of the aisle and committed to reaching solutions on important issues. I am confident he will perform well in this new position. I look forward to continuing to work with him.

### **Statement on the Resignation of William McGurn and the Appointment of Marc Thiessen as Assistant to the President for Speechwriting**

*December 14, 2007*

As Assistant to the President for Speechwriting, Bill McGurn has worked tirelessly to help communicate my agenda to the American people and the world. Bill is a serious thinker and a gifted writer whose command of language and knowledge of history have helped shape a wide variety of my speeches. I have counted on Bill to help me prepare State of the Union Addresses, policy announcements, and speeches to the Nation. In all our work together, I have valued Bill's creativity, insight, and sound judgment. And I have appreciated his friendship, generous spirit, and sense of humor.

As he moves on to the next stage of his career, Bill can be proud of his service at the White House. The son of a marine, Bill loves his country and has served it well. Laura and I have come to know Bill's wife, Julie, and their daughters Grace, Maisie, and Lucy, and we wish Bill and his family all the best.

I am pleased to announce that Bill's deputy, Marc Thiessen, will succeed him as Assistant to the President for Speechwriting. Marc has done superb work in the speechwriting office for more than 3 years. Before coming to the White House, he served as chief speechwriter to Secretary Rumsfeld. Marc is a talented writer and experienced communicator who will do an outstanding job in his new position. I look forward to continuing to work with him.

### **Statement on the Formation of the National Council of the Damascus Declaration**

*December 14, 2007*

I applaud the recent formation of the national council of the Damascus Declaration in Damascus, Syria. The brave men and women who formed this council reflect the desires of the majority of Syrian people to live in freedom, democracy, and peace, both at home and alongside their neighbors in the region.

The Syrian regime continues to hold hundreds of prisoners of conscience and has arrested more than 30 national council members in the past few days. All those detained should be released immediately.

The Syrian regime continues to deny its citizens fundamental human rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of movement, and the right to elect a representative government responsive to their needs. The formation of the national council is an encouraging sign to all people who support freedom and democracy. We support the national council's principles of nonviolent struggle and open membership to all the people of Syria who believe the time has come for change.

### **Memorandum on Waiver of Reimbursement Under the U.N. Participation Act to Support UNAMID Efforts in Darfur**

*December 14, 2007*

Presidential Determination No. 2008-7

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State*

*Subject:* Waiver of Reimbursement Under the U.N. Participation Act to Support UNAMID Efforts in Darfur

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 10(d)(1) of the United Nations Participation Act of 1945, as amended (22 U.S.C. 287e-2(d)(1)), I hereby determine that transfer to the United Nations/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) of camps and other items furnished as assistance for the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and assistance required to preserve continuity of functions during the immediate transition from AMIS to UNAMID without reimbursement from the United Nations is important to the security interests of the United States.

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

### **Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployments of United States Combat-Equipped Armed Forces Around the World**

*December 14, 2007*

*Dear Madam Speaker:* (Dear Mr. President:)

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of U.S. combat-equipped Armed Forces around the world. This supplemental report covers operations in support of the war on terror and Kosovo.

**THE WAR ON TERROR**

Since September 24, 2001, I have reported, consistent with Public Law 107-40 and the War Powers Resolution, on the combat operations in Afghanistan against al-Qaida terrorists and their Taliban supporters, which began on October 7, 2001, and the deployment of various combat-equipped and combat-support forces to a number of locations in the Central, Pacific, European, and Southern Command areas of operation in support of those operations and of other operations in our war on terror.

I will direct additional measures as necessary in the exercise of the U.S. right to self-defense and to protect U.S. citizens and interests. Such measures may include short-notice deployments of special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations throughout the world. It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States.

United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, continue to conduct the U.S. campaign to pursue al-Qaida terrorists and to eliminate support to al-Qaida. These operations have been successful in seriously degrading al-Qaida's training capabilities. United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, ended the Taliban regime and are actively pursuing and engaging remnant al-Qaida and Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. The total number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan is approximately 25,900, of which approximately 15,180 are assigned to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The U.N. Security Council authorized the ISAF in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 of December 20, 2001, and has reaffirmed its authorization since that time, most recently, for a 12-month period from October 13, 2007, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1776 of September 19, 2007. The mission of the ISAF under NATO command is to assist the Government of Afghanistan in creating a safe and secure environment that allows for continued reconstruction and the exercise and extension of Afghan authority. Currently, 37 nations con-

tribute military and other support personnel to the ISAF, including all 26 NATO nations.

The United States continues to detain several hundred al-Qaida and Taliban fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests. The combat-equipped and combat-support forces deployed to Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in the U.S. Southern Command area of operations since January 2002, continue to conduct secure detention operations for the enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay.

The U.N. Security Council authorized a Multinational Force (MNF) in Iraq under unified command in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1511 of October 16, 2003, and reaffirmed its authorization in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 of June 8, 2004, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1637 of November 8, 2005, and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1723 of November 28, 2006, set to expire on December 31, 2007. Under Resolutions 1546, 1637, and 1723, the mission of the MNF is to contribute to security and stability in Iraq. These contributions have included assisting in building the capability of the Iraqi security forces and institutions as the Iraqi people drafted and approved a constitution and established a constitutionally elected government. The U.S. contribution to the MNF fluctuates over time depending on the conditions in theater as determined by the commanders on the ground; the U.S. contribution to the MNF is approximately 159,529 U.S. military personnel.

In furtherance of our efforts against terrorists who pose a continuing and imminent threat to the United States, its friends and allies, and our forces abroad, the United States continues to work with friends and allies in areas around the globe. These efforts include the deployment of U.S. combat-equipped and combat-support forces to assist in enhancing the counter-terrorism capabilities of our friends and allies. United States combat-equipped and combat-support forces also continue to be located in the Horn of Africa region.

In addition, the United States continues to conduct maritime interception operations on the high seas in the areas of responsibility

of all of the geographic combatant commanders. These maritime operations have the responsibility to stop the movement, arming, or financing of international terrorists.

#### **NATO-LED KOSOVO FORCE (KFOR)**

As noted in previous reports regarding U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo, the U.N. Security Council authorized Member States to establish KFOR in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999.

The original mission of KFOR was to monitor, verify, and when necessary, enforce compliance with the Military Technical Agreement (MTA) between NATO and Serbia (formerly the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), while maintaining a safe and secure environment. Today, KFOR deters renewed hostilities and, with local authorities and international police, contributes to the maintenance of a safe and secure environment that facilitates the work of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Currently, there are 24 NATO nations contributing to KFOR. Ten non-NATO contributing countries also participate by providing military personnel and other support personnel to KFOR. The U.S. contribution to KFOR in Kosovo is about 1,498 U.S. military personnel, or approximately 10 percent of KFOR's total strength of approximately 15,251 personnel.

The U.S. forces have been assigned to the eastern region of Kosovo. For U.S. KFOR forces, as for KFOR generally, maintaining a safe and secure environment remains the primary military task. The KFOR operates under NATO command and control and rules of engagement. The KFOR coordinates with and supports UNMIK at most levels; provides a security presence in towns, villages, and the countryside; and organizes checkpoints and patrols in key areas to provide security, to protect minorities, to resolve disputes, and to help instill in the community a feeling of confidence.

In accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244, UNMIK continues to transfer additional competencies to the Kosovo Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, which includes the President, Prime Min-

ister, multiple ministries, and the Kosovo Assembly. The UNMIK retains ultimate authority in some sensitive areas such as police, justice, and ethnic minority affairs.

NATO formally continues to review KFOR's mission at 6-month intervals. These reviews provide a basis for assessing current force levels, future requirements, force structure, force reductions, and the eventual withdrawal of KFOR. NATO has adopted the Joint Operations Area plan to regionalize and rationalize its force structure in the Balkans. The UNMIK international police and the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) have full responsibility for public safety and policing throughout Kosovo. The UNMIK international police and KPS also have begun to assume responsibility for guarding patrimonial sites and established border-crossing checkpoints. The KFOR augments security in particularly sensitive areas or in response to particular threats as needed.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in all of these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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#### **December 8**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President declared a major disaster in Oregon and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides beginning on December 1 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Washington and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides beginning on December 1 and continuing.

### ***December 9***

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush went to the National Building Museum where they participated in the taping of the annual "Christmas in Washington" concert for later television broadcast.

### ***December 10***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

### ***December 11***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he was briefed by Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff on the winter storms in the Midwest. Then, in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, he participated in a meeting on the "Monitoring the Future" report on teen drug use.

Later in the morning, the President participated in an interview with Martha Raddatz of ABC News. Then, in the Private Dining Room, the President had lunch with President Giorgio Napolitano of Italy.

In the afternoon, the President met with leaders of the U.S. broadcasting services and Broadcasting Board of Governors Chairman James K. Glassman.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in an interview with Martha Raddatz of ABC News. They then attended a holiday reception.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Alan Garcia Perez of Peru to the White House on December 14.

The President declared an emergency in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in

the area struck by severe winter storms beginning on December 8 and continuing.

The President announced his intention to nominate Yousif B. Ghafari to be Ambassador to Slovenia.

The President announced his intention to nominate James K. Glassman to be Under Secretary of State (Public Diplomacy) with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced his intention to nominate Stanley C. Suboleski to be Assistant Secretary of Energy (Fossil Energy).

The President announced his intention to nominate Jon Wellinghoff to be a member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations: Sheldon G. Adelson; Phil Gramm; Harold McGraw III; George Perdue; and Faryar Shirzad.

### ***December 12***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate telephone conversations with U.S. Representatives-elect Robert J. Wittman of Virginia and Robert E. Latta of Ohio to congratulate them on their election victories.

The President declared an emergency in Missouri and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the area struck by severe winter storms beginning on December 8 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in Kansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the area struck by severe winter storms beginning on December 6 and continuing.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert F. Cohen, Jr., to be a member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Marcia S.B. Bernicat to be Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

### ***December 13***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with President Abdelaziz

Bouteflika of Algeria to express his condolences for the loss of life due to the December 11 bombings in Algiers.

In the evening, the President attended two holiday receptions.

#### ***December 14***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with President Alan Garcia Perez of Peru. Later, at the State Department, he and Mrs. Bush attended a holiday reception for the diplomatic corps.

The President announced his intention to nominate David J. Kramer to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and to appoint him as a member of the Congressional Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China and as an Executive Branch Commissioner-Observer on the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The President announced his intention to appoint Donald J. Wright as Alternate Representative of the U.S. on the Executive Board of the World Health Organization.

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### **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

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#### ***Submitted December 11***

Yousif Boutrous Ghafari,  
of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Slovenia.

James K. Glassman,  
of Connecticut, to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy with the rank of Ambassador, vice Karen P. Hughes.

Gregory G. Katsas,  
of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Peter D. Keisler, resigned.

Kevin J. O'Connor,  
of Connecticut, to be Associate Attorney General, vice Robert D. McCallum, Jr.

Douglas H. Shulman,  
of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term prescribed by law, vice Mark W. Everson.

G. Murray Snow,  
of Arizona, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona, vice Stephen M. McNamee, retired.

Stanley C. Suboleski,  
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Fossil Energy), vice Jeffrey D. Jarrett, resigned.

Glenn T. Suddaby,  
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of New York, vice Lawrence E. Kahn, retired.

Jon Wellinghoff,  
of Nevada, to be a member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the term expiring June 30, 2013 (reappointment).

#### ***Withdrawn December 11***

James K. Glassman,  
of Connecticut, to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2010 (reappointment), which was sent to the Senate on April 26, 2007.

#### ***Submitted December 12***

Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat,  
of New Jersey, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Senegal, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Robert F. Cohen, Jr., of West Virginia, to be a member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission for a term of 6 years expiring August 30, 2012, vice Stanley C. Suboleski, term expired.

Harvey E. Johnson, Jr., of Virginia, to be Deputy Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security (new position).

***Withdrawn December 12***

Harvey E. Johnson, Jr., of Virginia, to be Deputy Administrator and Chief Operating Officer, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security (new position), which was sent to the Senate on September 7, 2007.

***Submitted December 14***

Thomas M. Beck, of Virginia, to be a member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of 5 years expiring July 1, 2010, vice Wayne Cartwright Beyer, resigned.

Matt Michael Dummermuth, of Iowa, to be U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Iowa for the term of 4 years, vice Charles W. Larson, Sr., resigned.

David J. Kramer, of Massachusetts, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, vice Barry F. Lowenkron.

***Withdrawn December 14***

Thomas M. Beck, of Virginia, to be a member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of 5 years expiring July 29, 2012, vice Dale Cabaniss, term expiring, which was sent to the Senate on June 28, 2007.

Wayne Cartwright Beyer, of New Hampshire, to be a member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of 5 years expiring July 1, 2010, vice Othoniel Armendariz, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate,

which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

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**Checklist  
of White House Press Releases**

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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

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***Released December 8***

Statement by the Office of Management and Budget Director James A. Nussle on congressional spending

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Oregon

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Washington

***Released December 10***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

***Released December 11***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Transcript of a press briefing by National Drug Control Policy Director John P. Walters and National Institute on Drug Abuse Director Nora Volkow on the Monitoring the Future report

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Alan Garcia of Peru

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Oklahoma

Fact sheet: Significant, Long-Term Reductions in Youth Drug Use

***Released December 12***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary: U.S. Financial Action Against Money Laundering for Mexico's Sinaloa Drug Organization

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 1429

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Missouri

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Kansas

### ***Released December 13***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate action on energy security legislation

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4343

### ***Released December 14***

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Scott M. Stanzel

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate passage of FHA modernization legislation

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate approval of agricultural legislation

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4252 and H.J. Res. 69

Fact sheet: United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act

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## **Acts Approved by the President**

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### ***Approved December 12***

H.R. 1429 / Public Law 110–134  
Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007

### ***Approved December 13***

H.R. 4343 / Public Law 110–135  
Fair Treatment for Experienced Pilots Act

### ***Approved December 14***

H.R. 4252 / Public Law 110–136  
To provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through May 23, 2008, and for other purposes

H.J. Res. 69 / Public Law 110–137  
Making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes

H.R. 3688 / Public Law 110–138  
United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act